



CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN
FOR
FFY 2004-2005

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/03 – 9/30/05. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

The official text of the applicable laws and regulations govern, and the Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of the fact that, for purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 162.57 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

(Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 05-31-2006)

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AMENDMENTS LOG

Child Care and Development Services Plan for
For the period: 10/1/03 -- 9/30/05

SECTION AMENDED	EFFECTIVE/ PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE	DATE SUBMITTED TO ACF	DATE APPROVED BY ACF

Instructions:

- 1) Lead Agency completes the first 3 columns and sends a photocopy of this Log (showing the latest amendment sent to ACF) and the amended section(s) to the ACF Regional contact. A copy of the Log, showing the latest amendment pending in ACF, is retained in the Lead Agency's Plan.
- 2) ACF completes column 4 and returns a photocopy of the Log to the grantee.
- 3) The Lead Agency replaces this page in the Plan with the copy of the Log received from ACF showing the approval date.

Note: This process depends on repeated subsequent use of the same Log page over the life of the Plan. At any time the Log should reflect all amendments, both approved and pending in ACF. The Lead Agency is advised to retain those "old" plan pages that are superseded by amendments in a separate appendix to its Plan.

PART 1 -- ADMINISTRATION

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

1.1 Lead Agency Information (as designated by State chief executive officer)

Name of Lead Agency: Maine Department of Human Services

Address of Lead Agency: 11 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

Name and Title of the
Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer: Peter Walsh, Acting Commissioner

Phone & Fax Numbers: 207/287-2736
207/287-3005 fax

1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information (day-to-day contact)

Name and Title of the
State Child Care Contact (CCDF): Carolyn Drugge

Address of Contact: 11 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

Phone & Fax Numbers: 207-287-5060; FAX 207-287-5031
E-Mail Address: Carolyn.drugge@maine.gov

1.3 Estimated Funding

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2004. (§98.13(a))

- CCDF: \$ 16,689,377
- Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF (if known): \$ 7,250,000
- Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care (if known): \$ 4,500,000
- State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: \$ 1,749,818
- State Matching Funds: \$ 3,022,398
- Total Funds Available: \$ 33,211,593

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1.4 The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of the CCDF will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent): \$ 800,000 (5 %). (658E(c)(3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

1.5 Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

() Yes. – GO to Section 1.8.

(X) No, and the following describes how the Lead Agency maintains overall control when services or activities are provided through other agencies. (658D(b)(1)(A), §98.11)

The Community Services Center, Division of Contracted Community Services contracts with community-based, private, non-profit organizations to provide child care services, administer the state voucher program, provide resource and referral services, coordinate child care provider training activities, or otherwise support the quality of child care in the state. Contracts and awards to these agencies are governed by the policies as promulgated in the Department of Human Services' Purchase of Services Policy Manual (Attachment A). This manual includes provisions on financial and administrative management, service policies, and income eligibility determination. Furthermore, as required by state law, contract agencies meet certain performance indicators as outlined in Attachment B.

Contract specialists monitor all contracts for program and financial compliance and for specific performance requirements according to the policy manual and the performance indicators. This monitoring includes quarterly reporting as well as an annual site visit to review financial records and client records, if applicable.

All services are scheduled for renewal through a competitive bid process every seven years. In addition, any new funds are awarded on a competitive basis as required by state law.

The Director of the Office of Child Care and Head Start, as well as other program managers in the Division, meet periodically with grantees, various associations, councils, and advisory groups to evaluate the delivery of services. The program managers will solicit recommendations from these groups on how to improve services and implement modifications and/or improvements as deemed necessary.

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1.6 For child care services funded under §98.50 (i.e., certificates, vouchers, grants/contracts for slots based on individual eligibility), does the Lead Agency itself: (§98.11)

- Determine individual eligibility of non-TANF families? YES ____ NO X
If NO, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of non-TANF families for child care:

Eligibility for non-TANF families is determined by the 11 Child Care Resource and Referral Service agencies - the voucher management agencies in the state (Maine Child Care Resource Development Centers) and the 54 contracted child care agencies. Please see Attachments C and D.

- Determine individual eligibility of TANF families? YES X NO ____
If NO, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of TANF families for child care:

- Assist parents in locating child care? YES ____ NO X
If NO, identify the name and type of agency that assists parents:

Resource and referral services are provided through contract with the 11 Child Care Resource and Referral Service agencies (Maine Child Care Resource Development Centers). Please see Attachment C.

- Make payments to providers? YES X NO ____
If NO, identify the name and type of agency that makes payments:

The Department of Human Services provides direct payments to providers for clients receiving TANF as well as to 54 contracted agencies providing direct child care services. The voucher management agencies make payments to providers as outlined in the Purchase of Social Services Policy Manual, Section V, Sub-Section I.

1.7 Is any entity named in response to section 1.6 a non-governmental entity? (See section 1.6 of the guidance) (658D(b), §§98.10(a), 98.11(a))

- () No.
X Yes, the following entities named in section 1.6 are non-governmental:

The 11 voucher management agencies and the 54 contracted agencies providing direct child care services are non-governmental agencies.

Section 1.8 - Use of Private Donated Funds

1.8.1 Will the Lead Agency use private donated funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2) and (f)?

(X) No. GO TO 1.9

() Yes. The name and type of entity designated to receive private donated funds is:

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Type: (government/private non-profit/private for-profit)

Section 1.9 - Use of State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Expenditures for CCDF-Eligible Children

1.9.1 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

(X) No.

() Yes,

_____ The State assures that its level of effort in full day/full year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to §98.53(h)(1).

_____ Estimated % of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (It may not exceed 20%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

1.9.2 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirement? (§98.53(h))

(X) No.

() Yes, and

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_____ Estimated % of the Matching Fund requirement will be met with pre-K expenditures. (It may not exceed 20%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

- 1.9.3 If the State answered yes to 1.9.1 or 1.9.2, the following describes State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents (§98.53(h)(2)):

Part 2--DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

2.1 - Consultation and Coordination

2.1.1 Consultation. Describe the consultation the Lead Agency held in developing this Plan and the results of that consultation. At a minimum, the description must include the following:

- Representatives of local governments;
- Tribal organizations when such organizations exist within the boundaries of the State. (658D(b)(2), §§98.12(b), 98.14(b))

The Child Care Advisory Council discussed the State Plan at two of their monthly meetings. The Maine Child Care Advisory Council is a legislatively created council whose members include employees from: The Bureau of Family Independence, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services, the Department of Education, Head Start, the Office of Substance Abuse. There is one member of the Senate and two from the House of Representatives. There is a parent representative. There are nominees from the Maine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Maine Child Care Directors' Association, a family day-care provider and a Native American Representative. There is a representative from a local early intervention special needs project, and nominees from the Coalition for Maine's Children, the Maine Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, the Maine Women's Lobby and one provider of child care for school-age children.

The Child Care Advisory Council served in an advisory capacity on the use of quality funds and in the development of a survey to collect broader input on the use of the quality money.

Organizations represented on the Advisory Council distributed the questionnaire to their members. 85 surveys were returned. The results of the survey were used to inform the professional development section of the State Plan.

Local Economic Development Leaders - The draft State Plan was mailed to local Economic Development Offices. While no written comments were returned, telephone conversations gathered their views on the contents of the plan.

Tribal Organizations - The draft State Plan was mailed to all tribal child care grantees for suggestions and input.

2.1.2 Coordination. Lead Agencies are required to coordinate with other Federal, State, local, tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.

Check any of the following services provided by agencies with which

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the Lead Agency coordinates. In each case identify the agency providing the service and describe the coordination and expected results:

X Public health including programs that promote children's emotional and mental health

- The Office of Child Care and Head Start worked with partners interested in children's mental health to create a Task Force to focus on the development of a state wide system of support for child care providers working with children with behavioral issues. The Task Force is made up of representatives from the Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services, the Maine Association of Infant Mental Health, Child Development Services (early intervention), the Center for Community Inclusion, Office of Child Care and Head Start, Department of Education Early Childhood Programs and Head Start Directors. The Task Force is studying ways to develop and fund a mental health consultation system to meet the needs of child care providers and the children in their care. The expected results of this system would be fewer children asked to leave child care because of behavioral issues.
- The Office of Child Care and Head Start worked with the Bureau of Health in the development of the State Early Childhood Comprehensive Planning Grant submitted recently. The Division of Maternal and Child Health is facilitating collaboration with the Regional Homeland Security Offices to develop a system in which the nurse epidemiologists would be available by phone to answer questions related to diseases. The expected result of the comprehensive planning grant will be an integrated system of services for children.
- The Immunization Division in the Bureau of Health provides technical assistance as licensing rules are developed and provides print materials to child care resource and referral agencies to distribute to parents. The goal is to increase the immunization rates of Maine children.
- The Bureau of Medical Services provides information about the Maine CHIP program, Maine Care, to child care providers and parents through the child care resource and referral programs. The expected result is an increase in the number of families and children enrolled in the health insurance program.

X Healthy Child Care America Campaign

- The Office of Child Care and Head Start is the grantee for the Healthy Child Care America grant. In past years, the grant has provided funds for a health consultant to provide training and technical assistance to child care providers; funded a Health and Safety Conference and a Health and Safety calendar for child care providers; increased collaboration between health programs and child care; and provided training on a strength based assessment of social emotional development. The current Transitioning Health Child Care America grant will continue to expand the health consultant training, facilitate the development of a system of children's mental health consultants, develop a Emergency Preparedness Handbook in collaboration with the Bureau of Health, and increase the number of child care providers trained in the use of the Devereaux Early

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Childhood Assessment Tool. Expected results will include an increased level of safety as a result of each of the 712 child care centers and 200 Nursery Schools having an Emergency Preparedness Handbook. A evaluation survey on the use of the Devereaux Early Childhood Assessment Tool will measure the application of the tool and its use in curriculum planning.

 X Employment services

- The Maine Department of Labor received a child care apprenticeship grant through the U.S. Department of Labor and a National Quality Child Care Initiative to fund family child care apprenticeships. The program is continuing through the efforts of the Maine Department of Labor. Family child care providers received tuition-free training and in-home mentors to provide support and apply knowledge to practice. The result is increased quality of care.

 X Public education

- The Office of Child Care and Head Start collaborated with the Department of Education to sponsor a statewide conference on After School Programs and to develop guidelines for the RFP for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Sessions from the conference were made available on interactive television at a later date for staff from after school programs who were unable to attend the conference. The desired result of the collaboration is an increase in the number of after school programs available, especially those that meet the needs of working parents.

 X TANF

- The Bureau of Family Independence and the Office of Child Care and Head Start work collaboratively on many issues. One of the programs funded by both agencies is Child Care Plus ME. This state and university cooperative agreement funds technical assistance and support services for child care providers who are caring for children with special needs. The ASPIRE program uses the same data collection fields and regulations for child care subsidy as the CCDF program.

 X State Pre-K programs

- The collaboration between state Pre-K programs and child care is in the beginning stages. The Department of Education and the Office of Child Care and Head Start co-sponsored a conference on Early Care and Education in Maine. The goal of the conference was to look at collaborative possibilities between pre-k, Head Start and child care.
- The Department of Education Early Childhood Education consultant and the director of Child Development Services (Early Intervention) serve on the Early Childhood Learning Results Task Force. These links to the DOE will be important to the cross-program utilization of the Early Childhood Learning Results.

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 X Head Start programs

- ◆ Maine has a comprehensive system of Head Start and child care collaboration. Full-day, full-year Head Start programs that meet the needs of working parents are available in most counties. The State Child Care Administrator also serves as the State Head Start Collaboration Director. Training systems are designed to meet the needs of both child care providers and Head Start staff. Home Start programs, family child care programs that provide Head Start services, serve 110 children in Maine. In addition to state funding for Head Start, Maine also funds Head Start programs through the Tobacco Settlement Funds to provide full-day, full-year child care

 X Programs that promote inclusion for children with disabilities

- The Office of Child Care and Head Start has a cooperative agreement with the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion to provide technical assistance and flexible funding to assist providers in their care of special needs children. Five specialist are available to providers by phone, email or to visit the child care program to assess the needs and provide information that meets the needs of each situation. Funds are available on a limited basis to pay for additional staff or equipment to enable a special needs child to remain in child care. The expected result is fewer special needs children being asked to leave child care because the provider can not meet their needs.

 X Others (please identify) (658D(b)(1)(D), §98.12(a), 98.14(a)(1) & (2))

2.2 - Public Hearing

Describe the Statewide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. At a minimum, the description must indicate:

- Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing : May 1 ,2, & 3, 2003
- Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing:
A notice of three public hearings was published in the Portland Press Herald, Bangor Daily News and The Waldo Independent
- Date(s) of public hearing(s) June 10, June 11, and June 12, 2003
- Hearing site(s)The hearings were held at 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the following locations:
Penquis Community Action , Bangor, June 10, 2003
Child Care Resource Development Center, Belfast, June 11, 2003
Child Care Connections, Portland, June 12, 2003

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s) (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)): The notice of public hearings included

information that copies of the draft plan were available beginning May 9, 2003 from the Office of Child Care and Head Start, DHS. Written comments were accepted until June 15, 2003.

2.3 - Public-Private Partnerships

- Describe the activities, including planned activities, to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs, including the results or expected results. (658D(b)(1), §98.16(d)):

Maine has a number of tax benefits for business support of child care. The Office of Child Care and Head Start developed a fact sheet describing these tax benefits. The information was shared with business leaders at a Business Conference and with Small Business Counselors who work with new business start-ups. The expected results would be more businesses supporting child care programs and more support of resource and referral services for employees.

The Office of Child Care and Head Start collaborates with the Maine Humanities Council and RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteers Program) to provide literacy activities to child care programs through the Born to Read Program. Retired Seniors are trained to read to children and the Maine Humanities Council is funded by a variety of sources to provide books for the child care programs.

The Maine Public Broadcasting System provides training and books to child care programs to expand the caregivers' skills in literacy development. Their train-the-trainer model has expanded literacy programs into Head Start and child care programs around Maine. PBS provides videos and books to assist trainers in their work.

The Office of Child Care and Head Start has a cooperative project with the Maine Arts Commission to provide an "Early stARTs" program. Child care programs apply to have an artist visit their classroom for a one day visit to share their art and teach skills

Small Business Administration and Office of Child Care and Head Start collaboration on business training. The Small Business Administration helped coordinate the development of a 30 hour curriculum on Family Child Care as a Business. This 30-hour curriculum will become part of the 180-hours of Core Knowledge Training offered to child care providers through the Child Care Resource Development Centers around the state. The expected results will be higher income for child care providers through better business practices and lower turnover rates. Other collaborators are Women, Work and Communities, Coastal Enterprises, Inc, and Small Business Development Counselors.

The Mid-coast United Way Success by Six program developed a survey to measure the readiness of children for kindergarten in that area. They are also partners with the Maine Office of Child Care and Head Start, the Department of Education and the Bureau of Health in the Readiness Indicators Project funded by Packard, Kauffman, and Ford Foundations.

PART 3 -- CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED

Section 3.1 - Description of Child Care Services

REMINDER: The Lead Agency must offer certificates for services funded under 45 CFR 98.50. (98.30) Certificates must permit parents to choose from a variety of child care categories, including center-based care, group home care, family child care and in-home care. (§98.30(e))

3.1.1 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

() No.

(X) Yes, and the following describes the types of child care services, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))

The Department of Human Services contracts with 54 agencies statewide to provide direct child care services. The agencies provide child care services to eligible families. Services include full-time or part-time child care, wrap-around services for Head Start, and family child care networks for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age in licensed child care centers or family child care homes.

3.1.2 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

() No.

(X) Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv)):

The provider must be a minimum of 16 years old and pass a state criminal record check, a child protective check, and a motor vehicle check, and may not be a member of the voucher client's immediate family. (If the provider is a minor, the state criminal record check and child protective check are done on the provider's parents) The cost of in-home care cannot exceed the approved market rate for legal, unregulated caregivers without authorization of the Department of Human Services.

3.1.3 Are all of the child care services described in 3.1.1 above (including certificates) offered throughout the State? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

(X) Yes

() No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered:

Section 3.2 - Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care. These rates are provided as Attachment E. The attached payment rates are effective as of January 1, 2003.

Maine has a tiered reimbursement system. Child care programs that have been awarded a “Quality Certificate” by the Office of Child Care and Head Start receive a 10% increase in their subsidy payment. Programs that have made substantial progress toward accreditation (waiting for visit) may receive a 5% increase for one year.

The following is a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

- The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed: September 2002___. (§98.43(b)(2)) A copy of the Market Rate Survey and the results of the survey are provided as Attachment F. Maine Department of Human Services contracted with Mills Consulting Group to complete a Market Rate and Workforce Study. A total of 2,768 surveys were mailed on April 5, 2002 including 712 to licensed child care centers and 2,056 to family child care homes. 61 surveys were returned as undeliverable and 1,873 were completed and returned for a response rate of 69%. The response rate varied by county and type of program with a response rate of 60% for child care centers and 73% for family child care providers.
- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))

Maine sets the maximum allowable payment at the 75th percentile of the market rates observed in the survey. Rates are set for unregulated providers at 90% of family child care rates.

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Rates were adjusted to insure that infant and toddler care were paid at a higher rate than preschool care to adjust for the lower staff: child ratios and smaller group sizes.

- Additional facts that the Lead Agency relies on to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access include: (§98.43(d))

Rates for children served in non-traditional hours will be calculated by applying an adjustment factor of 1.35 to the hours of care provided after 6 pm and before 6 am Monday through Friday and anytime on Saturday and Sunday.

- If the payment rates do not reflect individual rates for the full range of providers -- center-based, group home, family and in-home care -- explain how the choice of the full range of providers is made available to parents.

The market rate survey included responses from all types of providers except those that are license-exempt in the state or providers caring for fewer than three children. Rates for these providers are based on 90 percent of child care home rates for the appropriate county and age category.

Maine's rates include centers, family homes and legal, unlicensed care. In-home care is paid at the family child care rate. For child care provided within the client's home (in-home care), the client, as the employer, shall be responsible for compliance with Federal and State minimum wage laws, tax laws, and regulations pertaining to domestic service workers.

Centers are facilities caring for groups of children in a non-residential setting. A family child care home is a licensed provider in caring for up to 12 children in her/his own home. An in-home provider cares for the children of only one family in that family's home. The state does not distinguish between group and family child care homes, therefore rates for only three categories are shown.

Section 3.3 - Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

By statute, all eligible children must be under the age of 13, or under age 19 if physically or mentally incapable of self-care, or under court supervision, and reside with a family whose income does not exceed 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) for a family of the same size and whose parent(s) are working or attending a job training or educational program or who receive or need to receive protective services. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a))

- 3.3.1 Complete column (a) in the matrix below. Complete Column (b) ONLY IF the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

IF APPLICABLE

Family Size	(a) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) Income Level, lower than 85% of SMI, if used to limit eligibility	
		\$/month	% of SMI
1	24,834		
2	32,476		
3	40,117		
4	47,758		
5	55,399		

The Lead Agency uses the State Median Income (SMI) of the year FY 2003

- 3.3.2 How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income, for instance, work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments? Is the income of all family members included, or is the income of certain family members living in the household excluded? Please describe and/or include information as Attachment_A_. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

Please see Attachment A, Section VI, A – Income Eligibility.

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- 3.3.3 Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions or priority rules, for example, income limits that vary in different parts of the State, special eligibility for families receiving TANF, or eligibility that differs for families that include a child with special needs? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))
- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)
- 3.3.4 Has the Lead Agency elected to waive, on a case-by-case basis, the fee and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))
- ☐ Not Applicable, CCDF-funded child care is not provided in cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services.
- ☐ No
- ☒ Yes
- 3.3.5 Does the Lead Agency allow child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (Physical and mental incapacity must then be defined in Appendix 2.) (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))
- ☐ No
- ☒ Yes, and the upper age is 19.
- 3.3.6 Does the Lead Agency allow child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))
- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes, and the upper age is ____.

-
- 3.3.7 Does the State choose to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))
- (X) Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the State considers these children to be in protective services.)
- () No.
- 3.3.8 Does the State choose to provide respite child care to children in protective services? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))
- (X) Yes.
- () No.

Section 3.4 Priorities for Children

- 3.4.1 The following describes the priorities for serving CCDF-eligible children including how statutorily required priority is given to children of families with very low family income and children with special needs: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2) (658E(c)(3)(B))
- Maine gives priority among eligible families to:
- a) Very Low Income – family with a gross family income, adjusted to family size, that does not exceed 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
 - b) Children with Special Needs – Children with a specific diagnosis/disability which, without intervention, may impede or impair the attainment of developmental milestones; and/or children who evidence a developmental delay in one or more of the following skill areas: cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, receptive and/or receptive expressive language, social/emotional or self-care; and/or children considered to be a risk for health or developmental problems as a result of established biological risk factors, and/or as a result of identified environmental risk factors. Parents will provide documentation of identification of special need from Child Development Services, or a public health agency, school, welfare, office or community social service.
- 3.4.2 The following describes how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of families who are receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), families who are attempting through work activities to transition off of TANF, and families that are at risk of becoming dependent on TANF. (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

The Maine Department of Human Services guarantees child care assistance to TANF families if the family meets their employment and training plan and for families that have left TANF because of increased earnings. For families currently receiving TANF scholarships, child care is paid for directly from the State of Maine's TANF block grant. For families leaving TANF, child care subsidies are funded through a combination of CCDF and a TANF transfer to CCDF.

Families transitioning from TANF will receive a referral from their caseworker to one of the state eleven voucher management agencies. The Voucher Management Agencies will assist each family in completing necessary applications and provide payment to the family's provider of choice.

- 3.4.3 The following describes how the Lead Agency addresses situations in which funding is not sufficient to serve all families that are technically eligible under State policies: Attachment A Section V, Subsection I, page 38

The Voucher Management Agency shall maintain waiting lists if service is not available at the time of application or referral for service.

Waiting lists shall be updated no less frequently than every six months.

TANF transitional clients shall be served as referred and shall not be placed on a waiting list for TANF Transitional child care as long as funding is available for this target group.

Special needs and very low income families shall be given equal priority over all other clients. Among these two priority groups, clients are selected for services on a first-come, first-serve basis by county;

When there are no special needs or very low income clients on the waiting list, all other client groups shall be accepted for service on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Section 3.5 - Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services

- 3.5.1 A sliding fee scale, which is used to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care, must vary based on income and the size of the family. A copy of this sliding fee scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works is provided as Attachment G.

Will the Lead Agency use additional factors to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

- ☐ No.
☒ Yes, and the following describes any additional factors that will be used to determine a family's contribution including, but not limited to, a maximum amount (family cap), number of children in care, cost of care, and/or whether care is full or part-time:

As shown in Attachment G, the fee for a family receiving subsidized child care is determined based on the weekly gross income of a family adjusted by size of the family. In addition, if a family has more than one child in care, the fee for the 2nd child enrolled is reduced by 50 percent, the fee for the third child is reduced by 75 percent, and no additional fee is assessed for any more children.

In addition, families may not be assessed fees that exceed 10% of a family's gross income for all of their children in child care.

- 3.5.2 Is the same sliding fee scale provided in the attachment in response to question 3.5.1 above in use in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

- ☒ Yes
☐ No, and other scale(s) are provided as Attachment ____.

- 3.5.3 The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size, (§98.42(c)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: \$15,028.

The Lead Agency must elect ONE of these options:

- ☐ ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.
☐ ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.

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- (X) SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. A description of these families is:

On a case by case basis a Department or Tribal caseworker may waive or reduce a parents assessed fee for Child Protective clients, post-protective clients, or children in the custody of federal recognized tribes.

- 3.5.4 Does the Lead Agency have a policy that prohibits child care providers from charging families any unsubsidized portion of the providers' normal fees (in addition to the contributions discussed in 3.5.1)? (§98.43(b)(3))

- (X) No
() Yes, please describe:

- 3.5.4 The following is an explanation of how the co-payments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) are affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))

The fee scale recognizes the financial constraints of families with more than one child. For these families the fee is reduced for the subsequent children as described above. The fee scale also adjusts the portion a family is responsible for gradually as income increases. Finally, a family will never pay more than 10% of their gross family income regardless of the number of children.

Section 3.6 - Certificate Payment System

A child care certificate means a certificate, check, or other disbursement that is issued by the Lead Agency directly to a parent who may use it only to pay for child care services from a variety of providers including community and faith-based providers (center-based, group home, family and in-home child care), or, if required, as a deposit for services. (658E(c)(2)(A)), 658P(2), §§98.2, 98.16(k), 98.30(c)(3) & (e)(1))

Describe the overall child care certificate payment process, including, at a minimum:

- 3.6.1 A description of the form of the certificate: (§98.16(k))

See Attachment H

- 3.6.2 A description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to the choice of provider: (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), §§98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2))

A parent eligible to receive a certificate may choose from a broad continuum of caregivers. This includes in-home and relative providers, other license-exempt caregivers, as well as licensed family child care providers and/or child care centers. All license-exempt caregivers must satisfactorily pass child protective, motor vehicle and state criminal record checks.

The voucher management agencies in the state also serve as the state's child care resource and referral agencies. Therefore, all families receive consumer education information and for families that have not yet selected a child care provider, the agency may provide referrals as requested.

- 3.6.3 If the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, explain how it ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate. (§98.30(a) & (b))

It is an expectation of the Department that all contracted child care agencies will inform parents applying for child care subsidy of the certificate option. Currently, 29% more funding is spent on certificates than grants/contracts for contracted slots, however, 58% more children are served through the certificate program.

PART 4 - PROCESSES WITH PARENTS

4.1 The following describes the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). If the process varies for families based on eligibility category, for instance, TANF versus non-TANF, please describe. The description should include:

- How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and about child care options;
- Where/how applications are made;
- Who makes the eligibility determination;
- How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4; and
- Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs.
- Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies.

Information regarding potential child care subsidies is available through the child care resource and referral agencies, the Department's Regional Offices, Head Start Agencies, and other community-based service organizations in the state.

Applications (see attachment I) are made available for child care services through the eleven Voucher Management Agencies state-wide and contracted child care agencies. Applicants may apply in person or through the mail. Assistance in completing the application is provided by contracted child care agencies or the state's voucher management agencies.

The contracted child care agencies and voucher management agencies will determine eligibility. Eligibility determination is only completed if all supporting documentation is received within 30 days of the completed application. If eligible, parents will enter into an agreement with the child care provider as well as sign a fee agreement.

Families must notify the agency of any changes in income once receiving a child care subsidy. The voucher management agencies and contracted child care centers also re-certify a family every six months. A family remains eligible as long as income is at or below 85% of the state median income and the parent(s) are employed or in training. Maine does not extend eligibility for the child care subsidy if the parent is also receiving Head Start services.

- 4.2 The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32))

The Department's Division of Licensing maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints. Any parent seeking child care may request whether a substantiated complaint has been made against a provider.

A description of parent's rights and responsibilities related to child care is available at the following address <http://www.state.me.us/dhs/rights.htm> for the Office of Child Care and Head Start web site.

- 4.3 The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))

As required in the state licensing rules for family child care homes and child care centers, all providers are required to allow parents unlimited access to children. In addition, parents must be able to reach all child care facilities by telephone when children are present.

- 4.4 The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the Child Care Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Family Independence.

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- "appropriate child care":

Appropriate child care is child care furnished by a child care provider who has passed background checks as required by State law and regulation.

- "reasonable distance":

Reasonable distance is defined as not exceeding by ½ hour the normal commute time from the participant's dwelling to work or an approved activity.

- "unsuitability of informal child care":

Unsuitable child care is defined as a potential child care provider that has a substantiated complaint(s) involving abuse or neglect, or a background check with the State Bureau of Investigation and/or the Department of Motor Vehicles that indicates convictions that would justify the denial of the application to receive child care payments.

- "affordable child care arrangements":

Affordable child care is defined by the child care market rate that are determined every 2 years by the Office of Child Care and Head Start of the Maine Department of Human Services.

PART 5 - ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE

5.1 - Quality Earmarks and Set-Asides

- 5.1.1 The Child Care and Development Fund provides earmarks for infant and toddler care and school-age care and resource and referral services as well as the special earmark for quality activities. The following describes the activities; identifies the entities providing the activities; and describes the expected results of the activities.

Infants and toddlers:

1. Infant Toddler Summer Institutes and Stipends

For each of the past two summers an intensive summer institute has been available to caregivers of infants and toddlers. Caregivers in both family child care and center-based child care participated in the institute offered by the University of Maine at Farmington for three credits. The caregivers also received equipment stipends of \$500-\$1,500 to enhance quality for infants and toddlers in their care. The amount of the stipend is correlated with the number of new spaces for infants or toddlers they plan to add in the next year, from 1-3.

To date, 30 participants in Summer 2001 and 34 in Summer 2002 completed the institute for credit and received stipends. This incentive has resulted in 215 additional slots for infants and toddlers.

The Summer Institute will be offered in Summer 2003. An advanced level course is also planned. The Institutes will increase the knowledge of providers about infant and toddler care and will serve as an incentive to increase the number of spaces available for infant and toddler care in Maine.

2. Maine Roads to Quality Infant and Toddler Curriculum

As part of Maine Roads to Quality 180 hour Core Knowledge Training, a 30-hour curriculum on infant and toddler care has been developed and offered. This entry-level training is tailored to meet the needs of Maine caregivers in family child care and child care centers.

To date, the training has been offered 23 times throughout the state and 436 caregivers have participated. Evaluation of the training has indicated increased knowledge of infant and toddler care and application of information in practice.

3. Technical Assistance to Early Head Start/Infant and Toddler Child Care

A unique collaboration between the Maine Office of Child Care and Head Start and the Education Development Center (EDC) has resulted in a position aimed at providing technical assistance to Early Head Start and Infant and Toddler Child Care programs in Maine. This

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part-time position has provided support for the newly funded Early Head Start programs, made follow-up visits to Infant/Toddler Summer Institute participants to help identify needs for advanced training and given technical assistance on-site to newly established programs providing Infant/Toddler care. The position is in its start-up year.

Resource and referral services:

The department provides funding to each of the eleven Child Care Resource Development Centers around the state to provide child care referrals, consumer education and to build the capacity of the child care system in Maine. They also serve as the voucher management agencies in Maine. A list of the agencies is included in Appendix C.

All of the agencies are using the NACCRAware software to make referrals and to track activities of the Resource Development Center.

The intended outcome is to help parents find affordable and accessible child care. Performance based contracting requires the RDC's to survey parents related to satisfaction with service and usefulness of the referrals, increased knowledge about child care and increased use of subsidies.

School-age child care:

CCDF funds will be used to support a position to focus on expanding and improving the quality of after-school programs in Maine. Activities will include recruitment, training, evaluation consultation, and technical assistance to promote the expansion and continuation of after-school programs statewide.

A key component of the work will be collaboration with policymakers, educators, child care providers, youth development workers, program developers, advocates, parents and others interested in improving outcomes for children through after-school programs that provide both school-age care to support working families and educational after-school programs that improve academic achievement. The expansion of quality after-school programs will be achieved through joint planning, sharing of resources and best practices, building bridges to and between federal, state, and local after school initiatives, and forging partnerships necessary for comprehensive statewide after school policies.

- 5.1.2 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51, 98.16(h)). The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including earmarked funds):

\$ 2,300,000 (11.7 %)

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5.1.3 Check either "Yes" or "No" for each activity listed to indicate the activities the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the special earmark for quality activities). (658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h))

Yes No

- ☒ ☐ Comprehensive consumer education;
- ☒ ☐ Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards;
- ☒ ☐ Improving the monitoring of compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements;
- ☒ ☐ Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance;
- ☒ ☐ Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers;
- ☒ ☐ Activities in support of early language, literacy, and numeracy development;
- ☒ ☐ Activities to promote inclusive child care;
- ☒ ☐ Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children;
- ☒ ☐ Other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))

5.1.4 Describe each activity that is checked "Yes" above, identify the entity(ies) providing the activity, and describe the expected results of the activity.

Comprehensive consumer education

Comprehensive consumer education is provided through Maine's Child care Resource Development Centers (RDCs). The eleven RDCs provide written material and consultation to parents through referral staff. The RDCs also provide referral services to both private and subsidized clients. In addition, the Departments Regional Offices provide information to parents seeking child care.

The Office of Child Care and Head Start and the Maine Child Care Resource Development Centers (MRDC) worked together to develop a packet on consistent information on child care for parents who requested referrals or information.

The packet includes:

- Fact Sheets on the following topics:
 - The Cost of Child Care
 - Double Child Care Tax Credit
 - Look for Quality Care for Infants
 - What Is Quality Child Care?
- Revised Steps to Choosing Child Care booklet

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- Information on health and safety from the Maine Department of Human Services including information on Maine Care health insurance program
 - Brochure for *The Growing Years*, a series of child development fact sheets for parents and providers from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension

A poster, *On the Road to Quality Child Care*, describes the services of the Child Care Resource Development Centers, was printed and distributed to community agencies and sites.

Monitoring and Compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements.

CCDF funds will be used to maintain and increase monitoring of compliance with licensing requirements. In addition, staff of the Division of Licensing and the Office of Child Care and Head Start will revise the rules for family child care homes through a stakeholders process.

Training and Technical Assistance

CCDF quality funds are used to fund the state's child care and early education career development center, Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ). MRTQ is responsible for the development of an 180 core knowledge training program, maintaining registries for providers and approved trainers, administering a scholarship program, and administering an accreditation support project.

In addition, CCDF funds are allocated to the child care resource development centers to deliver the approved MRTQ training.

Improving Salaries and Compensation

The Department provides a cost of living increase each year to the contracted child care agencies to provide in part salary adjustments and any other quality improvements as the agency deems necessary. In addition, the Department provides a 10% differential reimbursement to quality child care providers.

A quality child care provider must meet one of the following criteria:

- Current accreditation by one of the following agencies: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC), or the National School Age Care Association (NSACA).
- Meet Head Start Performance Standards for Programs of Excellence and Quality.
- Be a family child care provider with either a:
Child Development Association Credential (CDA); or a Associates, Bachelor, Masters, or Ph.D in Early Childhood Education, child development, or related degree. Providers with related degrees will need at least 12 credits in Early Childhood Education. Providers with

degrees will also need to complete a 3-credit course or 45 hours of Core Knowledge Training every 3 years.

Other Quality Activities

CCDF quality funding is used to support the Child Care Plus ME program. This program provides technical assistance and financial support to child care providers serving children with special needs.

5.1.5 Is any entity identified in sections 5.1.1 or 5.1.4 a non-governmental entity?

() No.

(X) Yes, (see section 1.6 of the guidance):

University of Maine – Child Care Plus ME
University of Southern Maine – Maine Roads to Quality
Child Care Resource Development Centers(Child Care Resource & Referral Service) (See Attachment C)
Contracted Child Care Agencies (See Attachment D)

5.2 - Good Start, Grow Smart Planning and Development

This section of the Plan relates to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative which is envisioned as a Federal-State partnership that creates linkages between CCDF, including funds set-aside for quality, and State public and private efforts to promote early learning. In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to assess their progress toward developing voluntary guidelines on language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy, a plan for the education and training of child care providers, and a plan for coordination across at least four early childhood programs and funding streams.

5.2.1 - Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning

- Indicate which of the following best describes the current **status** of the State's efforts to develop research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) regarding language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy for three to five year-olds:
 - a)___ Preliminary thinking or planning.
 - b)___X___ Guidelines are being developed.
 - c)___ Guidelines are developed but need to be modified.
 - d)___ Guidelines are developed and implementation is in progress.
 - e)___ Guidelines are developed and implemented in pre-kindergarten programs but not in child care.
 - f)___ Guidelines are developed and implemented.

g)_____ Other. Please describe:

- Describe the **process** that was used or is planned for developing the State's early learning guidelines. Indicate who or what entity provided (or is providing leadership) to the process as well as the stakeholders involved. Was (or is) the process framed by State legislation, research and/or guiding principles? If so, please describe. How are (or will) the early learning guidelines and the State's K-12 educational standards aligned? If they are not aligned, what steps will be taken to align them? If the early learning guidelines are in development, what is the expected date of completion?

The Director of the Office of Child Care and Head Start is providing leadership to the development of the Maine Early Childhood Learning Results. Education Development Center of Newton Ma is providing the technical assistance and facilitation. Last October a Task Force began the work of developing the Maine Early Childhood Learning Results. The Task Force is a group of professionals representing the following groups: Head Start, Higher Education, Child Care Directors, Maine Department of Education, Child Development Services (Early Intervention), The Center for Community Inclusion, the Accreditation Project at Maine Roads to Quality (Early Care and Education Career Development Program), Faculty of the Early Childhood Education Programs at the Technical High Schools, Public School Administrators, and Resource Development Centers, and Teachers.

The Head Start Child Outcomes Framework was used a guide in the development of the learning results. Indicators from other states, such as Rhode Island, Minnesota, Georgia, Wyoming, Florida and Texas, were also used for reference. We also relied on the work of organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and researchers such as David Dickinson, James Christie and Doug Clements.

The Task Force met monthly to write and revise the learning results. A draft was sent to 50 “expert” reviewers across the state. Their feedback was incorporated. Then two public forums were held on May 9 and June 5 to receive input from child care, Head Start and pre-K teachers, public school administrators, family child care professionals and others. Revisions will be made based on the input from the field.

Before the Early Childhood Learning Result are incorporated into the public school pre-K programs, they will need to be approved by the State Board of Education and the Maine State Legislature.

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- Describe the **domains** of development that the early learning guidelines address or are expected to address, e.g., social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical. States that have completed early learning guidelines should include a copy as an appendix to the plan. If the guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate website address.

The Maine Early Childhood Learning Results align with the Maine K-12 Learning Results, therefore the following domains or content areas are included:

- Career Preparation
- English Language Arts
- Health and Physical Education
- Mathematics
- Modern and Classical Languages
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- Visual and Performing Arts

In addition to the 8 content areas in the Maine K-12 Learning Results, the Early Childhood Learning Results will have two additional content areas: Approaches to Learning and Personal and Social Development.

The current version of the Early Childhood Learning Results can be found as Attachment J and on the Office of Child Care and Head Start web site at <http://www.state.me.us/dhs/publications.htm>

- Describe the process the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines, e.g., feedback and input processes, dissemination, piloting, training in the use of the guidelines, and linkages with other initiatives such as incentives for provider education and training. To what extent is (or was) implementation anticipated in the development of the guidelines? To which child care settings do (or will) the guidelines apply and are the guidelines voluntary or mandatory for each of these settings? How are (or will) community, cultural, linguistic and individual variations, as well as the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in implementation?

The implementation plan includes at least one pilot site in each of the following settings:

- Head Start
- Child care center
- Nursery school
- Family child care home
- Public Pre-K program

The pilot implementation program will include training, technical assistance and/or a mentor program. The training will guide the implementation of the learning results in developmentally appropriate ways. It will be focused on teacher or caregivers interactions

with children and integrating researched based practices into their daily practice to promote greater learning for children.

The staff who pilot the learning results will provide more feedback on the appropriateness of learning results and another revision will be made.

The Maine Learning Results are voluntary guidelines that will be used across programs. A section for using the guidelines with English Language Learners will be included. The developers were also cognizant of developing the performance indicators for all children. A parent guide will be developed and distributed.

- As applicable, describe the State's plan for **assessing** its early learning guidelines. What will be the focus of the evaluation, i.e., guideline development and implementation, programs or child care settings, and/or outcomes related to children? Will young children's progress be evaluated based on the guidelines? How will assessment be used to improve the State's guidelines, child care programs, plans and outcomes for individual children?

At this point we will focus evaluation on guideline development and implementation.

In the future, as appropriate assessments are put into place, they will be used to inform teachers as they build intentionality in their practice and shape their curriculum.

Section 5.2.2 - State Plans for Professional Development

- Describe the provider training, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities that are available to child care providers. Are these opportunities available Statewide to all types of providers? If not, please describe.

Maine has a Child Care and Early Education Career Development System (Maine Roads to Quality) in place. A 180-hour core-knowledge training program has been developed. This training is offered statewide to all types of providers through the Child Care Resource Development Centers. In the fall of 2003 one of the training programs will be made available on the web to meet the needs of rural family child care providers.

A number of credit-bearing courses are also made available each summer through the Office of Child Care and Head Start. The topics vary depending on current needs. A course on teaching literacy and one teaching numeracy will be offered in addition to the course, *Infant, Toddlers and their Caregivers*. These are offered as one-week Summer Institutes to enable providers to attend from around the state.

Maine also has an infant/toddler specialist to provide technical assistance to caregivers statewide. See 5.1.1

- Does the State have a child care provider professional development **plan**?

(X) Yes; if so, identify the entities involved in the development of the plan and whether the plan addresses all categories of providers. As applicable, describe: how the plan includes a continuum of training and education, including articulation from one type of training to the next; how the plan addresses training quality including processes for the approval of trainers and training curriculum; how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy development. Indicate whether the plan is linked to early learning guidelines and, if so, how.

The Child Care and Early Education Career Development System – Maine Roads to Quality – was developed using a stakeholder process with input from a large number of providers, higher education, trainers and others. A stakeholder meeting was held after the program started to determine next steps. During the next year a strategic planning process will be held to determine a long-range plan for child care in Maine. The future work of the Career Development System will be included in the strategic plan.

Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) includes a trainer registry, a provider registry, a scholarship program and accreditation support. The 180-hour core knowledge training developed by MRTQ has been articulated with the Early Childhood Education associates degree programs at the 7 Maine Community Colleges for credits through a portfolio review process. Trainers for the 180 hours of core knowledge training are required to have a Master's degree or team teach with a trainer with a Master's degree.

The Early Childhood Learning Results Task Force will develop a training plan for the implementation of the early learning guidelines. Training will include a variety of methods – workshops, seminars, credit courses, web-based courses and technical assistance or mentorship. The focus will be on linking the guidelines to curriculum in developmentally appropriate ways. The *Promoting Social and Emotional Competence Training Modules* developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning will be piloted this year through the Maine Roads to Quality Training System. Linking activities in the modules to the early learning guidelines will be accomplished during the pilot testing. The modules will be offered statewide the following year.

Future training will focus on authentic assessments and using assessment to improve practice.

() No; if no, are steps under way to develop a plan? If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and numeracy.

- Are program or provider-level **incentives** offered to encourage provider training and education? If yes, please describe. Include any links between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy.

The Department of Human Services provides a 10% differential reimbursement to quality child care providers. A quality child care provider must meet one of the following criteria:

- ◆ Current accreditation by one the following agencies: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC), or the National School Age Care Association (NSACA)
- ◆ Meets the Head Start Performance Standards for Programs of excellence and Quality
- ◆ Be a family child care provider with either a: Child Development Associate credential (CDA); or an Associates, Bachelor, Masters, or Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education. Providers with related degrees will need at least 12 credits in Early Childhood Education. Providers with degrees will also need to complete a 3-credit course or 45 hours of Core Knowledge Training every 3 years.

Providers who increase their skills through the Infant/Toddler Summer Institute receive a stipend to purchase new equipment if they agree to increase the number of infants and or toddlers in their care. The course is offered without charge.

CCDF funds are used to provide scholarship funds to pay for credit bearing courses in Early Childhood Education, including courses in early language, literacy, pre-reading, numeracy, and social and emotional development.

The Child Care Center rules that took effect in November, 2002 require staff to have 30 hours of training each year in order to re-new their license.

As the Maine Child Care Strategic Plan is developed incentives for training related to early language, literacy, pre-reading and numeracy will be developed.

- What are the expected **outcomes** of the State's professional development plan and efforts to improve the skills of child care providers? As applicable, how does (or will) the State assess the effectiveness of its plan and efforts? If so, how does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape its professional development plan and training/education for child care providers?

Currently the professional development system is being evaluated through implementation data: number of participants, completion rates of each module, completion rate of total 180 hours core knowledge training, number of participants who use the training to receive the Child Development Associate credential, number of participants who enroll in associates degree programs, evaluation of training by participants, number of scholarship recipients, number of programs that complete accreditation.

The Maine Office of Child Care and Head Start received a Child Care Data Capacity Grant in collaboration with the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. The grant will be used to develop an assessment process to measure outcomes of professional development related to the practitioner, to the child care program and to child and family experiences.

Maine is also one of the states that is reviewing the Bank Street College of Education *Toolkit for Evaluating Initiatives to Improve Child Care Quality*.

Section 5.2.3 - State Plan for Program Coordination

- Does the State have a **plan** for coordination across early childhood programs?

() Yes.

Indicate whether there is an entity that is responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination.

(X) No.

Indicate what steps are under way to develop a plan for coordination.

While Maine does not have specific plan for coordination across early childhood programs, it has a strong history of program collaboration. The Child Care Administrator also serves as the Head Start Collaboration Director. Most Head Start programs have full-day, full-year programs utilizing child care funds to pay for contracted slots. Nine of the eleven Head Start programs receive the 10% Quality program bonus on their child care funding based on their reception of the Program of Excellence or Program of Quality Award from ACF Region 1 Office.

Head Start and child care programs also coordinate with public school pre-K programs to provide full day service for working parents. Head Start and pre-K programs also collaborate to provide the comprehensive services of Head Start to children in public school pre-K programs.

Head Start and Child Development Services (Early Intervention) have a cooperative agreement to work together to serve children with special needs.

The 180-hours of Core Knowledge Training offered by the Child Care Resource Development Centers is utilized by child care providers (center-based, family child care, and legal-licensed),

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Child Development Services (Early Intervention) staff, and Head Start staff. This gives staff from different programs a common base of knowledge across programs.

Child Care Plus ME, the technical assistance and training program for child care providers who serve special needs children is a collaborative project with TANF and the Department of Education.

The Child Care Advisory Council, a legislatively mandated body, serves as a coordinating body with members representing public school, Child Development Services, TANF, parents, legislators, licensing, Head Start, child care directors, family child care, school-age child care, business, Bureau of Health, and others.

A strategic plan will be developed for child care in Maine in the coming year. During this work, efforts will be made to include public pre-K, Title 1, Even Start, and Child Development Services, as well as child care, TANF, and Head Start.

- Describe the **results** or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children.

The results of this strategic plan development will be a plan for the implementation of Maine Early Childhood Learning Results, including professional development for the implementation of the guidelines that will be available to providers from all programs for three and four year olds and in the long term results will include children with increased readiness for school

- Describe how the State's plan supports or will support continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

PART 6 - HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

(ONLY THE 50 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMPLETE PART 6.
ONLY TERRITORIES COMPLETE PART 7.)

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements. The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>

Section 6.1 - Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- (X) YES, answer 6.1.2 and proceed to 6.2.
() NO, answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as relates to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

- () NO
(X) YES, and the changes are as follows:

Proposed changes in group size and child:staff ratios have been delayed. Further revisions will be made and implemented in June, 2004. The required annual training hours for full time center staff was raised from 24 to 30 hours.

6.1.3 For that center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

Section 6.2 - Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- ☐ YES, answer 6.2.2 and proceed to 6.3.
- ☐ NO, answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements as relates to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

- ☐ NO
- ☐ YES, and the changes are as follows:

6.2.3 For that group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety

- Health and safety training

Section 6.3 - Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

(X) YES, answer 6.3.2 and proceed to 6.4.

() NO, answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan?
(§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

(X) NO

() YES, and the changes are as follows:

6.3.3 For that family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety

- Health and safety training

Section 6.4 - Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

- 6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation referenced above? If:
() YES, answer 6.4.2 and proceed to 6.5.
(X) NO, answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.
- 6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan?
(§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

(X) NO
() YES, and the changes are as follows:
- 6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:
- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations) The Voucher Management Agency shall distribute Department approved materials that inform unregulated caregivers, relative caregivers and in-home caregivers of health and safety issues, including the control of communicable disease, immunization requirements, physical premises safety and training opportunities in health and safety, first aid, CPR and early care and education.
 - Building and physical premises safety
 - Health and safety training

Section 6.5 - Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)). Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- () All relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are no exemptions for relatives or different requirements for them.
- (X) All relative providers are exempt from all health and safety requirements.
- () Some or all relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following describes those different requirements and identifies the relatives they apply to:

Section 6.6 - Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?
 - () No
 - (X) Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits.

All providers must have a visit at (1) re-licensure, (2) if there has been a complaint and (3) any necessary follow-up visits

- Are child care providers subject to background checks?
 - () No

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(X) Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted): Providers, household members, staff and volunteers

- Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)
 - () No
 - (X) Yes, and the following describes the State's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable).

All providers and staff are mandated reporters of child abuse. If injury does not merit investigation for abuse or neglect, the child care providers must maintain a record of the incident and notify the appropriate families.

- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

Section 6.7 – Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- ☒ X Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- ☒ X Children who receive care in their own homes.
- ☒ X Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- ☒ X Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

PART 7 - HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES

Section 7.1 - Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers in the Territories (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all center-based care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

Section 7.2 - Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers in the Territories (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all group home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety

- Health and safety training

Section 7.3 - Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all family child care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

Section 7.4 - Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all in-home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

Section 7.5 - Exemptions to Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives may be exempted from health and safety requirements: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)). Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- () All relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 above, as appropriate; there are no exemptions for relatives or different requirements for them.
- () All relative providers are exempt from all health and safety requirements.
- () Some or all relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 and the following describes those different requirements and the relatives they apply to:

Section 7.6 - Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how Territorial health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?
 - () No
 - () Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits.

- Are child care providers subject to background checks?
 - () No
 - () Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted):

- Does the Territory require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)
 - () No
 - () Yes, and the following describes the Territory's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable).

- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

Section 7.7 – Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

The Territory assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the Territorial public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The Territory exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- _____ Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- _____ Children who receive care in their own homes.
- _____ Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- _____ Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

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APPENDIX 1 -- PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures that:

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families.

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The Lead Agency also certifies that:

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))
- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))
- (3) it will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. (658E(c)(2)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

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APPENDIX 2 - ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY:

For purposes of determining eligibility and priority for CCDF-funded child care services, lead agencies must define the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

(1) *job training and educational program* –

Job training program means vocational training, field training, on-the-job training, and other recognized job readiness training program focused upon the acquisition of knowledge and skills that prepare the participant for employment.

(2) *attending* (a job training or educational program; include minimum hours if applicable)

Attending a job training or educational program – enrolled at least half time in any recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education

(3) *in loco parentis* –

An adult acting in place of a parent, such as a grandparent, foster parent, a state caseworker, and/or a legal guardian

(4) *physical or mental incapacity* (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) –

Children who are physically or mentally incapable of caring for themselves

(5) *protective services* -

Specialized casework services including respite care to neglected, abused, or exploited children and their families

(6) *residing with* -

The child is living with the applicant who is maintaining a home for the child. Maintaining a home means that the applicant is providing the main domicile for the child.

(7) *special needs child* -

Children with specific diagnosis/disability which without intervention may impede or impair the attainment of developmental milestones.

(8) *very low income* –

At or below 100% of the federal poverty level.

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- (9) *working* (include minimum hours if applicable) –

Gainful employment that produces earned income from wages, salaries, commissions, fees, tips or self-employment in ones' own business, professional enterprise, partnership or farm.

- (10) Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:

TANF transitional – Low income families who were TANF recipients in one of the three months preceding the month they were determined to be ineligible. Increased hours of work, increased earning, or loss of earned income disregards must have caused or contributed to the closure. TANF transitional clients must be referred in writing by the Bureau of Family Independence.

Family Violence Transitional – Low income survivors of domestic violence who are left homeless due to a violent situation and are residing in family violence transitional housing. Transitional housing clients must be referred by a Department funded family violence agency.